

From the Rector

The Rectory
October 2011

Dear Friends



In Salman Rushdie's novel, "Midnight Children" a Muslim doctor is described as being, "knocked forever into that middle place, unable to worship a God in whose existence he could not wholly disbelieve." This aptly captures where many people are in their spiritual lives. They are not atheists in that they do not wholly disbelieve in God. At the same time they are not certain enough to regularly worship. To those who are knocked forever in this middle place the following can be said.

First, the Church is there for you. One of the great joys of the Church of England is that it is the Church for half believers. It is the Church for those who wish to dip their toes into Christian spirituality whilst still unsure as to whether they want to plunge in or not. The Church does not expect people to believe before they belong. Rather it encourages belonging however tenuous in the trust that such belonging can help people in their quest for belief. The calling of regular worshippers is to be a spiritual resource to the countless half believers among whom we live.

Second, God is nearer than you think. Recently I sat in Trafalgar Square reading a book. Thronging the Square were energetic families with young children, cheerful tourists and good natured street entertainers. Within the common humanity of that Saturday afternoon there was God. That is how God comes to us. He comes through the everyday fabric of our living, through people, through books, through music, through events and such like. As the Roman Catholic writer Gerard Hughes puts it, "God is in the facts." God is not confined to the outer edges of our human existence. Rather God is at the heart of that existence, in the facts of life as we experience them.

Third, commitment is the only way. When Jesus exploded onto the New Testament scene he did not invite people to sit down and debate about God. Rather he challenged people to, "Follow me." It was their commitment to the way of Jesus that opened their eyes. The same is true for us today. The story is told of the 18th century evangelist John Wesley. In his early years John was wrestling with belief. Then aboard a ship travelling back from America he met some returning missionaries. On seeking their counsel they advised him, "Live out your faith and faith will come." John followed their advice and found that they were right.

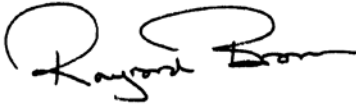
Rector's letter continued

This was also the experience of Albert Schweitzer. Albert lived in the early part of the last century. He was a brilliant musician and philosopher who was haunted by the words of Jesus to, "Follow me." Late in life he trained as a medical doctor and spent his remaining years working in a remote part of Africa. He described his experience in this way:

"He comes to us as one unknown, as of old by the lakeside he came to those who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word, "Follow thou me" and sets us to the tasks that he has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship and as an ineffable mystery they shall learn in their own experience who he is."

To be knocked in the middle place may be a common experience but the doorway out of that place beckons us all.

Your Rector



Shoe Boxes and the Olympics



This autumn, when it comes to choosing gifts for your shoe box for needy children in Eastern Europe and Africa, why not do an 'Olympic themed' shoe box?

As well as giving you the chance to do something a bit different with your shoe boxes, this is also your chance to send sporty items out to needy children in our world – children who might otherwise not have the chance to experience the joy of sport for themselves.

GIFTS: You might want to include a tennis ball, skipping rope, baseball hat, small football, inflatable beach ball, stop watch, sweat bands, swim goggles, toy medals or

some other sports-related gift that would bring a smile to a child!

BOX: Decorate your shoebox with Olympic stickers, drawings or even try and get hold of rapping paper with a sporty theme.

MESSAGE: Add a message to your child, stating that the shoe box has come from the home of the next Olympics and that you hope they enjoy the sports items you've included in your box for them to play with.

Boxes should be returned to Lesley Mann by the end of October.

Favourite Bible Verses

Lindsay Howard chooses Job chapter 38, verses 1 and 4–7



Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said.... “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?”

New International Version

These verses grab my attention in the same way that a Hollywood blockbuster film does; they set out a climactic final scene with the two main characters suddenly coming together amidst staggering special effects and a deafening soundtrack.

For the previous thirty seven chapters God has been silent, while Job and his friends question what it is to be ‘godly’, why good people suffer and ultimately whether faith does you any good.

Then suddenly God speaks from the midst of thunderous storm with a booming voice and addresses Job in an astounding way.

Rather than answering Job’s questions directly, God poses questions of his own which puts those asked of him into sharp perspective. The chapter continues with God using more magnificent language to describe equally grand elements; walking on the ocean floor, commanding the day to dawn, the storeroom where snow and hail are kept and directing the movement of the stars in the sky.

In a similar way to Job and his friends, I have a great many questions about life;

- why do bad things happen?
- why does God allow good people to endure terrible hardship?
- why does it sometimes feel that our prayers are not answered?

While I’m sure that I’ll struggle with them for all of my life, they melt away somewhat when I read these words.

The grandeur of these passages and the awe-inspiring words that are used remind me that there are bigger themes and mysteries that I can’t comprehend. They strengthen my belief that God is the architect of all of the amazing natural wonders that make up the Universe and that there’s a higher power that does have the answers to all of those eternal questions.

While the verses make me feel very small, they also make God appear very big which I find both comforting and exhilarating and which, for those reasons, mark them out as amongst my favourites from the Bible.

Lindsay Howard

Friends of Essex Churches Trust – Ride & Stride

Sadly very few participants passed through the All Saints' Church check point on Saturday 10 September on their sponsored journeys to visit as many churches and chapels as they could on foot or by bicycle.

Just six names were recorded during the whole day, which must be a record for this annual event.



Jane and Andrew Britter and Barbara Gregory

However, the stewards on duty were allowed to relax and enjoy the good Essex air between recordings, coffee breaks and catching up on events via the daily newspapers, as demonstrated in the attached photograph!

Ron Gregory

in touch – important

The copy dates for the next three editions of this magazine are as follows:

- November edition – Sunday 16th October
- December edition – Sunday 30th October – *yes, that early!*
- January 2012 edition – Sunday 4th December

Please do not be caught out by these irregular dates!

Please send items to Robin Stevens by e-mail to rms@ukgateway.net or on disk to 3 Aldeburgh Way.

A Bible Quiz on the Gospel of Mark

(from the New Revised Standard Version)

1. Who was in bed with a fever? (chapter 1)
2. What does Boanerges mean? (chapter 3)
3. What is the smallest of all the seeds on earth? (chapter 4)
4. What is the meaning of 'Talitha cum'? (chapter 5)
5. Where do evil intentions come from? (chapter 7)
6. What name did Peter give to Jesus? (chapter 8)
7. Who was the blind beggar sitting by the roadside? (chapter 10)
8. How much money did the poor widow put into the treasury? (chapter 12)
9. How many times did Jesus find Peter, James and John sleeping at Gethsemane? (chapter 14)
10. Who asked Pilate for the body of Jesus? (chapter 15)

Janet Shilling

The answers are on page 14

Observations on daily life

- Deeds are fruit, words are leaves.
- Progress is a tide. If we stand still we will surely be drowned.
- It's not whether you win or lose, but how you place the blame.
- It was a brave man who ate the first oyster.
- Worry is the darkroom in which negatives can develop.
- Anything that is good and useful is made of chocolate.
- Anytime things appear to be going better, you have overlooked something.
- Archaeologists will date any old thing.
- It's been lovely, but I have to scream now.

2011 is... The Year of the Bible

In the January *'in touch'* we announced that throughout 2011, All Saints' would be joining in a national celebration of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible.

During the year we have invited, encouraged and helped every member of the church and the wider community to discover, and rediscover, the riches and rewards of reading the Bible for themselves.

Sunday, 23rd October is 'Bible Sunday' and on that day we will recognise, celebrate and give thanks for the impact the Bible has had on so many people down the ages. We will also give thanks for the various initiatives that we have been involved in at All Saints'.

First, we encouraged members to take part in the E100 Bible Reading Challenge to read 100 short essential Bible passages – 50 from the Old Testament and 50 from the New Testament.

On Bible Sunday we will award certificates to all those who have taken part and completed the E100 Bible Reading Challenge.

If you completed the E100 Bible Challenge and would like to be presented

with a certificate to remind you of the Year of the Bible and completing the E100 Challenge, please add your name to the list in the porch.

Other events during the year that have helped to encourage the importance of the Bible have included:

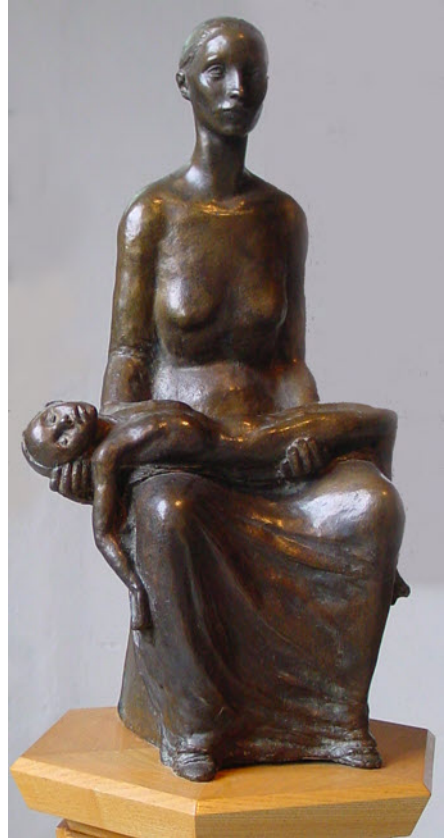
- A successful 'Day with the Psalms' which raised £400 for the Bible Society and the Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal;
- A Lent Course preaching about the Bible with a short discussion at the Evening Service;
- Sermons focusing on the importance of the Bible;
- 'Taking the Lid Off...' - a series looking in depth at various books in the Bible;
- Kate's "Getting to know the Bible" course for beginners;
- A monthly Bible Quiz;
- Favourite Bible Verses;
- Special Musical celebrations from the Choir;
- A display of Bible Reading material.

We hope that readers have enjoyed those events they have taken part in. But above all we hope that the Year of the Bible has enabled participants to gain a real insight in the overview of scripture and of the whole Bible so that they become more confident in their understanding and knowledge of the Bible.

Roger Shilling



Diocesan Healing Service with Bishop Stephen



Come together with our Diocesan Bishop for a special service of healing and reconciliation, and to receive prayer and anointing for healing.

Also a chance for all those involved in the healing ministry across the Diocese to come together.

Everyone Welcome

Chelmsford Cathedral
Sunday 16th October at 6pm
www.chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk
(01245) 294489



**CHELMSFORD
CATHEDRAL**

Parish Notes

We Plough the Fields

- Saturday 1st October Harvest Supper at 7.30pm in the Church Centre.
- Sunday 2nd October Harvest Festival services.

Bible Year

This year we have been marking the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Authorised Bible. On Sunday 23rd October we conclude our celebrations with a special Bible theme running through all services.

Dark Nights

Sunday 30th October is the end of British Summer Time. The clocks go back an hour.

Peep Into November

- Sunday 6th November: celebration of All Saints Day
- Saturday 12th November: annual church bazaar.
- Sunday 13th November: Remembrance Sunday.
- Sunday 20th November: Church Army preacher at 10.30am service.
- Sunday 27th November: Advent Sunday

The Rector

Mothers' Union

Eighty members of the Chelmsford Diocesan Mothers' Union met at the Cathedral Chapter House on 9th August. It is the date when, each year, we remember the founder of the MU – Mary Sumner. We were reminded of how the MU began in 1876 in Mary's parlour in her husband's rectory at Old Arlesford Hampshire, with a small group of local young mothers.

During our day at the Cathedral we thought about the way in which the MU had developed, grown and evolved over the years. The MU now has 4million members world-wide in 83 countries. Work overseas is not surprisingly focused on the family where programmes to improve literacy and numeracy have been put in place. On the health side the MU is playing its part in the provision of unpolluted water and teaching basic hygiene. Education about the prevention and treatment of AIDS also features on the MU's overseas agenda as do small business grants to encourage families and groups to become more self-reliant.

The Chapter House day ended with a discussion about the future development of the MU to make it an even more effective organisation.

Lesley Mann



presents

A Gala Twinning Concert

with

L'Ensemble Harmonique d'Annonay



SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER

7:15 p.m.

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL

Tickets £10.00

available from

Orchestra Manager ☎ 01245-260503

Joy Bome ☎ 01245-258629

James Dace and Son



Barn Dance

Saturday 8th October 2011

7.30 till 11pm

Chelmer Valley High School
live music with

'The Bucket Band'

Tickets: Adults £10

Children under 12yrs £5

*Ticket price includes hot supper
and a lot of fun!*

For tickets and enquiries
01371 821986



Little Waltham URC Roof Fund

**An Open Meeting
All Welcome**

All Saints' Kinsmen

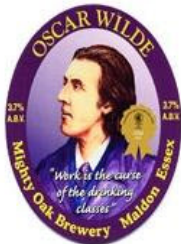
Tuesday 25th October

8.00pm

Coffee or Tea & Biscuits

Evening Admission **£4**

Samples no more than **£2**



Brewing Today

John Boyce

The Mighty Oak Brewery Maldon

Oscar Wilde the Champion Beer of Britain 2011

All Saints' Prayer Corner

Harvest for the Hungry

Our food parcels over the past 12 years have brought hope and show that we care for the plight of the people of Eastern Europe. Once again we are supporting the H4H project. This time has made me think of the wider issues of poverty all over our world and how we can pray for God to help us to support all these people.

Almost every page of the Bible speaks of God's heart for the poor. His concern for the marginalized, His compassion for the oppressed, His call for justice.

Where there is no vision people perish -
Proverbs 29:18

Jesus said: "He has sent me to bring good news to the poor." *Luke 4:18*

If we look further we see that are more references in the Bible about responding to the poor than about prayer, atonement, or Jesus' resurrection. And it is the poorest people in the world who are suffering most at the hands of unfair trade and other oppressive thoughtless actions.

So what might 'good news' mean for them? The verse goes on to talk about liberation of captives, protecting the weak, and the coming of justice so that all can be included in God's Kingdom.

1 John 3:17-18

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

Lord God,
Help us we pray
To recognise the difference between
Satisfaction and smugness,
Being content and being comfortable.
May our expressions of gratitude never
Deafen us to the cries of those in need
And in celebrating your love
May we never forget
That your love reaches others
Through us.
Amen

I was reminded this week of the verse in Matthew (Matthew 17:20) that talks about having faith as small as a mustard seed, to move mountains. The verse ends with 'nothing will be impossible for you?' That's some promise! So we can really believe our prayers make a difference, and that faith can move the mountains of injustice and poverty in this world.

Sometimes we don't do anything because we feel like there is too much to be done for our 'something' to make a difference. I remember back in the early 90s coming home from Zambia after giving some help setting up some health care for Aids victims in Kitwi. The people's poverty really hit me at that time and when I came home even buying myself a cup of coffee was impossible but after a while I slipped back into my old ways and did think there was little that I could do.

Christ our Lord,
your light shines into the shadows, and
shows us
where the obstacles to change lie.
We know that often they are in our own
hearts,



in the way we live, and in our daily choices and actions.

We pray that we may accept the light of your love as a challenge to change ourselves and our world.

We pray that, each day, we make the choices and take the actions that will bring an end to poverty and hunger, and lead us all towards a fairer world.

Be with us, Lord, as we face your challenge

and learn how to live our lives in love.

One of the H4H prayers is as follows:-
Give us eyes to see your face in the needs of others and ears to hear your voice in the cries of the poor that with arms outstretched we may let go of our riches and share the earth's bounty with all your people.,

I will end with a prayer I learnt as a child but one that is still I believe relevant to this day and this subject.

Dear Father, whom I cannot see,
I know that you are near to me.

Quite quietly I speak to you:

Please show me what you'd have me do.

Please help me plan kind things to do

For other people and for you.

Thank you for always helping me,

Dear Father whom I cannot see.

So how blessed we are that he will hear us and help us always.

Marion Hodges

Women's Fellowship

On 8th September, we welcomed back our members after the summer break. It was a happy meeting and enabled us to catch up on news. For our entertainment and our great enjoyment, Liz Belsham (on the alto saxophone) and Barbara Anderson (on the piano) played songs from the shows.

They entitled their concert "Once more with feeling..." They included music and songs by Gershwin, Aubrey Beswick, Duke Ellington, Irving Berlin as well as Leonard Bernstein. All this as well as a lovely rendering of "Panis Angelicus" by Cesar Franck. What a great start to our autumn programme! Thank you Liz and Barbara.

Lesley Mann

The Devil's Beatitudes

The teaching of Jesus known as the beatitudes is found at Matthew 5: 3-12. Here Jesus teaches about the attitudes and behaviour that he wants of his followers. But what if the Devil produced his teaching? Might it look like this, which was written by the prolific writer 'anon'?

Blessed are those who are too tired, busy or disorganised to meet with other Christians on Sunday each week –
they are my best workers.

Blessed are those who enjoy noticing the mannerisms of clergy, choir and servers –
I can see their heart is not in it.

Blessed are the touchy –
with a bit of luck they can even stop going to church.

Blessed are those who keep themselves and their time and their money to themselves –
they are my missionaries.

Blessed are those who claim to love their God at the same time as hating other people –
they are mine for ever.

Blessed are the troublemakers –
they shall be called my children.

Blessed are those who have no time to pray –
they are easy prey to me.

Blessed are you when you read this and think it is about other people and not about yourself –
I've got you!

Anon

From the Registers

Holy Baptism

- 21st August: Lyra Elizabeth Pye
Erin Grace Rose Monksfield
- 28th August: Zachary John Herbert Hodgson
Euan James Pattison
Harrison Oliver Snow

“We welcome you into the Lord’s Family”

Holy Matrimony

- 10th September: David Curry and Suzanne Tokely

“Those whom God has joined together”

Holy Burial and Cremation

- 19th August: Joyce Pratt aged 87 years
- 23rd August: Graeme Thorn aged 67 years
- 31st August: Betty Clapham aged 84 years
- 1st September: Dennis Marler aged 76 years
- 8th September: Ann Cutler aged 76 years

“I am the Resurrection and the Life”

Answers to the Bible Quiz on page 5

1. Simon’s mother-in-law (v30)
2. Sons of Thunder (v17)
3. A mustard seed (v31)
4. ‘Little girl, get up’. (v41)
5. From within, from the human heart (v21)
6. The Messiah (v29)
7. Bartimaeus (v46)
8. Two small copper coins (v42)
9. Three (v41)
10. Joseph of Arimathea (v43)

